

CLAIMS

It is claimed:

1. A docubase comprising:

a plurality of records stored in a machine-readable medium, each of said plurality of records

- 5 comprising a corresponding master document;

an index file comprising:

a header having a plurality of header entries and

a body having a plurality of body entries,

wherein at least one of the plurality of header entries has a header-to-body pointer

- 10 associated therewith that points to a corresponding one of the plurality of body entries,

at least one of the pointed to body entries is an initial body entry in a corresponding set of the body entries related to the header-to-body pointer pointing thereto,

at least one of the plurality of body entries has a body-to-record-pointer associated therewith that points to one of the plurality of records,

- 15 at least one of the plurality of header entries further has a corresponding header-identifier associated therewith and with a corresponding set of search criteria.

2. The docubase of Claim 1, wherein at least one of the body-to-record pointers comprises a volume identifier and an associated record identifier.

3. The docubase of Claim 2, wherein at least one of the plurality of records has corresponding
20 complete display formatting data associated therewith.

4. The docubase of Claim 1, wherein at least one of the plurality of records has corresponding complete display formatting data associated therewith.

5. The docubase of Claim 1, wherein the index file is a meta-data index file.

6. A docubase comprising:

a plurality of records stored in a machine-readable medium, each of said plurality of records comprising a corresponding master document;

5 a first index file comprising a first header having a plurality of first header entries, and a first body having a plurality of first body entries;

a second index file comprising a second body having a plurality of second body entries;

at least one of said first header entries has a header-to-body pointer associated therewith that points to a corresponding one of the plurality of first body entries, and a corresponding header-identifier
10 associated therewith and with a corresponding set of search criteria,

at least one of said first body entries has a body-to-body pointer associated therewith that points to a corresponding one of the plurality of second body entries,

at least one of said second body entries has a corresponding body-to-record-pointer associated therewith, and a corresponding value associated with the corresponding body-to- record pointer, said
15 body-to-record pointer pointing to a corresponding one of the records having the corresponding value associated therewith.

7. The docubase of Claim 6, wherein at least one of the body-to-record pointers comprises a volume identifier and an associated record identifier.

8. The docubase of Claim 7, wherein at least one of the plurality of records has corresponding
20 complete display formatting data associated therewith.

9. The docubase of Claim 6, wherein at least one of the plurality of records has corresponding complete display formatting data associated therewith.

10. The docubase of Claim 6, wherein the index file is a meta-data index file.

11. A method of searching a docubase having records stored on a machine-readable medium comprising the steps:

receiving a search query comprising search criteria of the docubase;

identifying an index file to search in response to the search query, said index file comprising a header having a plurality of header entries and a body having a plurality of body entries, at least one of the plurality of header entries having a header-to-body pointer associated therewith that points to a corresponding one of the plurality of body entries, at least one of the plurality of body entries having a body-to-record-pointer associated therewith that points to one of the records;

identifying one of the plurality of header entries corresponding to the search criteria;

identifying the header-to-body pointer associated with the identified header entry;

accessing the body entry pointed to by the identified header-to-body pointer, said accessed body entry being the first in a set of body entries related to the identified header-to-body pointer;

identifying the body entries within the set which have associated therewith body-to-record pointers pointing to records satisfying the search criteria; and

accessing the records satisfying the search criteria.

12. The method of Claim 11, wherein at least one of the body-to-record pointers associated with the identified body entries comprises a volume identifier and an associated record identifier.

13. The method of Claim 11, wherein at least one of the accessed records has corresponding complete display formatting data associated therewith, and further comprising the step of displaying the accessed records on a display device in a format specified by the corresponding complete display formatting data.

14. The method of Claim 11, wherein the accessed records comprise a first accessed record comprising a master document and a view document.

15. The method of Claim 11, wherein at least one of the plurality of header entries comprises a corresponding header-identifier associated therewith and with a corresponding set of search criteria, and wherein the step of identifying one of the plurality of header entries corresponding to the search criteria, is accomplished by determining the header identifier associated with the search criteria and then

5 identifying the header entry associated with the determined header identifier.

16. A method of searching a docubase having records stored on a machine-readable medium comprising the steps:

receiving a search query comprising search criteria of the docubase;

identifying a pair of index files to search in response to the search query, said pair including a
10 first index file comprising a first header and a first body, and a second index file comprising a second body, said first header having a plurality of first header entries each having a header-to-body pointer associated therewith that points to a corresponding one of a plurality of first body entries associated with the first body, the first body entries each having a body-to-body pointer associated therewith that points to a corresponding one of a plurality of second body entries associated with the second body, the second
15 body entries each having a corresponding body-to-record-pointer associated therewith, and a corresponding value associated with the corresponding body-to-record pointer, said body-to-record pointer pointing to a corresponding one of the records having the corresponding value associated therewith;

identifying one of the plurality of first header entries corresponding to the search criteria;

20 identifying the header-to-body pointer associated with the identified first header entry;

accessing the first body entry pointed to by the identified header-to-body pointer, said accessed first body entry being an initial first body entry in a set of first body entries related to the identified header-to-body pointer;

identifying the first body entry within the set of first body entries which has associated therewith
25 a body-to-body pointer pointing to the second body entry having a body-to-record pointer pointing to a record satisfying the search criteria; and

accessing the record satisfying the search criteria.

17. The method of Claim 16, wherein the body-to-record pointer pointing to the record satisfying the search criteria comprises a volume identifier and an associated record identifier.

18. The method of Claim 16, wherein each of the accessed records has corresponding complete
5 display formatting data associated therewith, and further comprising the step of displaying the accessed records on a display device in a format specified by the corresponding complete display formatting data.

19. The method of Claim 16, wherein the accessed records comprise a first accessed record comprising a master document and a view document.

20. The method of Claim 16, wherein each of the plurality of first header entries comprises a
10 corresponding header-identifier associated therewith and with a corresponding set of search criteria, and wherein the step of identifying one of the plurality of first header entries corresponding to the search criteria, is accomplished by determining the header identifier associated with the search criteria and then identifying the first header entry associated with the determined header identifier.